HISTORIC CRIMES and MYSTERIES

by WALT MASON

THE AMERICAN ARAM.

The fame of Eugene Aram, such as it is, promises to be imperishable.

Edward H. Ruloff was a far greater criminal than Aram, and quite as great a scholar, and his ignominious death was a comparatively recent matter, yet he is all but forgotten. Within the recollection of men now living his name was a household word throughout the country. But there was no Hood to embalm him in song, and no Bulwer to make him the central character of a novel; other murderers came forward and did their devoir, and Ruloff's memory died the death.

This remarkable man was born in New Brunswick in 1819 and was a bookworm from earliest childhood. His thirst for knowledge amounted to a passion. He lapped up information as eagerly as a warm dog laps up water. He was an omnivorous reader. Anything in the shape of a book attracted him, and he had the faculty of absorbing everything that was worth knowing in a volume, and then remembering it. His memory was abnormal. In his advanced years he could quote books he read when a child, and hadn't seen since.

The study of languages was his favorite pursuit, and he knew nearly all the tongues of the earth. His knowledge was profound, and it was all acquired without the aid of teachers. Had he been blessed with a moral character he surely would have been numbered among the great men of this country, but he had nothing of the kind. He was born without a conscience, and crime was to him at once a vocation and a recreation.

As a boy he worked in a New Brunswick drug store and stole things as he needed them. Later he studied law and refreshed himself by various small crimes during his leisure hours. For one of these he was sent to prison for two years, and while locked up he read everything in the prison library. After his release he went to New York state, and located in the small town of Dryden. There he became a teacher in a school for girls, and married one of his pupils, a girl of sixteen years.

W. H. Schutt, a relative of the girl, made a fuss over it, and this annoyed Ruloff greatly, so, to be revenged, he poisoned Schutt's wife and child. This crime was not suspected at the time, and it was only after several years that the facts were known. In his home he was a tyrant and bully, and made life a burden for his unfortunate young wife. His conduct at last became so outrageous that the neighbors rose as one man and talked with some enthusiasm of tar and feathers, so Ruloff removed to the village of Lansing, near Ithaca, where he began the practice of medicine.

Meanwhile he began work upon a book that was to be his masterpiece, and make his name immortal. It was a treatise on philology, and scholars who examined fragments of his manuscripts long afterward, declared that the erudition of the author was simply astonishing. His wife wasn't in sympathy with his work. She couldn't find it possible to love and admire a man who wrote profound essays during the daytime and then burglarized henhouses at night. Perhaps this is why he murdered her. No better reason for it has ever been discovered.

On June 24, 1845, Ruloff went to a neighbor and borrowed a horse and wagon. The neighbor helped him to lift a large box into the wagon, and he drove away. He journeyed to Ithaca, which town he reached at sundown, and spent several hours in a tavern holding wassail with sundry loafers. He seemed boisterously happy, and the loafers declared him a prince of entertainers. After a while he paid his score, hitched up his horse again, and drove to Lake Cayuga. There he secured a boat, and rowed away with the long box aboard.

The next morning he drove cheerily back to his home, and when the neighbors asked where his wife was, he told them she had gone to Ohio on a visit. This satisfied the neighbors, but it didn't satisfy Ruloff's brother-in-law, who began an investigation, with the result that Ruloff was arrested, charged with the murder of his wife. The body of the victim could not be found, so he was tried and convicted on a charge of abduction, and sentenced to ten years in the penitentiary. He was a good prisoner, and all his spare time was gven to study.

Immediately upon his release he was rearrested, charged with murder, but he made such an eloquent speech in his own defense that he was acquitted. But the people didn't want this man at large. They considered him a monster, and as dangerous as a rattlesnake. So he was again arrested, charged with the murder of his own child. He was convicted and sentenced to be hanged.

After his conviction he made a successful effort to gain the admiration and confidence of the jailer's son, a youth named Jarvis. He told great stories of buried treasures to such good effect that young Jarvis helped him to escape, and the two reached the mountains of Pennsylvania, where they led a vagabond life for a year. Then, Ruloff, tired of being a fugitive, away from books and libraries, surrendered to the authorities, and, by means of some legal twists, managed to regain his liberty after a while. This made the people so peevish that a lynching party called at the jail, but Ruloff had disappeared.

His subsequent career for several years was a compound of study and villainy. Sometimes he worked at his great treatise, and at other times he indulged in grand and petty larceny.

On a hot August night in 1870 a burglary was committed in Binghamton. Three robbers entered a store, and, having removed their shoes so they could work quietly, they began ransacking the place. Two clerks who were sleeping in the store were awakened by some slight noise, and they put up a brave fight to save their master's property. They were getting the best of it when one of the robbers drew a gun and fired, and one of the clerks fell, mortally wounded. The robbers escaped for the time, but a day or two later a stranger was found limping along the road, and was gathered in. He was soon identified as Ruloff, whose fame was everywhere in those days. Ruloff felt reasonably safe, for his comrades couldn't turn state's evidence. He had seen to that. A few days later their bodies were found in the river. One of them was Jarvis.

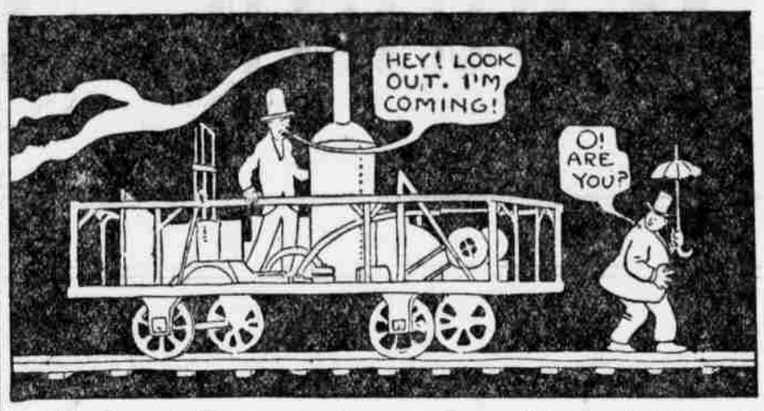
"One of the Robbers Drew a Gun and Fired."

Ruloff had a deformed foot, and one of the shoes found in the store was made to fit that foot, so his connection with the crime was established well enough. He was his own attorney at his trial, and the speech he made was a wonderful effort. It was much like that of Eugene Aram; in fact, he quoted Aram to some extent, saying that his days were given to honest toil and his nights to arduous study. His argument was along the line that society couldn't spare him. His great work on philology was approaching completion, and if the world was robbed of that monumental volume, it would be the greatest catastrophe of modern times.

The jury decided, however, that society would be able to struggle along without it, and found Ruloff guilty. He was sentenced to death, and went to the scaffold protesting that civilization was doing itself an irreparable injury. An eminent scientist examined his brain, and announced that Ruloff was by nature a thief and murderer, no more responsible for his acts than a tiger, and no more deserving of pity.

Only the high places in his criminal career have been touched in this account. A complete story would make a book as large as his own volume on philology.

First Locomotive Made in America



This funny looking wagon with an engine on it is the first "Made in America" locomotive. Don't look much like the way we make 'em nowadays, does it?

Peter Cooper made it about eight-five years ago for the Baltimore & Ohio railroad. It was small, but could pull 40 people 18 miles an hour.

However, the real beginning of the manufacture of locomotives was in 1832 when Mathias Baldwin of Philadelphia built the Ironsides, and the business which he began has grown until it is the largest in the world. The engines also have grown.

The first ones made weighed from four to six tons, while now many weigh 100 tons and can pull a load of 5,000 tons at a good rate of speed.—Kansas City Post.

BRIDGE SALT LAKE

ENGINEERS ACCOMPLISH REMARKABLE FEAT IN WEST.

Build Trestle 23 Miles Long, Large Part of Which Has Been Filled In and Made Solid Highway Across the Waters.

In the sixties the Union Pacific railroad was built west from Omaha and the Central Pacific (now part of the Southern Pacific) was built, each from San Francisco. When the builders came to the Great Salt Lake basin at Ogden they veered the road to the north and went around the lake to Lucien, a distance of 147 miles. In a third of a century engines grew five times as powerful. Freight trains would carry five times as much weight. Where once one train a day ran each way a dozen now puff around the lake, pulled by powerful engines over the mountains 4,900 feet high, down into the valley and up the mountains again and into Lucien, Utah. From Ogden to Lucien, as the crow or, perhaps, the aeroplane flies, the distance was about 103 miles, 30 miles of which was covered by the waters of Great Salt Lake from 1 to 30 feet deep. Weighed against the water was a level roadway 103 miles long, with no mountains to climb. But there washed the salt waters of the great lakes.

In 1902 engineers decided on a trestle bridge 23 miles long. Of the 20 miles of trestle 11 in the end were to be filled with earth. So of the 27½ miles through water nearly 16 miles were to be a solid ridge of earth 16 feet wide at the top and 17 feet above the water. The engineers decided to build a mile and a quarter of trestle a week, over 1,000 feet for each work day.

In June, 1902, trainloads of steel rails reached the lake. In July came the first piles. Many of them were so long that three cars had to be used to carry them. Three thousand men went to work. At night men worked in the gravel pits by electric light. In the cold of winter and the heat of summer there was no stopping.

Sixteen hundred and eighty tons of fresh water were used each day, all of it brought by train—some 80 miles, some 130 miles. Over 38,000 trees were cut down to make piles. On November 13, 1903, the track from the east and the track from the west were joined. The great bridge across the lake is now a solid path, except for 12 miles, which is a trestle.

Every 15 feet 5 piles are driven in a row crosswise to the track. They are fastened together on their sides with heavy timbers, four inches and eight inches thick. Across their tops and joining them together is a heavy beam 18 feet long and a foot square. Connecting this beam with the next set of piles 15 feet away are 11 heavy timbers laid lengthwise with the track. Above these stringers is a plank floor three inches thick. Above that is a coat of asphalt, then a foot or more of rock ballast on which the track and rails are laid. The floor of the trestle is 16 feet wide. The cut-off from Lucien to Ogden is almost as level as a table. For 36 miles there is no grade. For 30 miles more the grade is so slight that an average person would need to travel a half mile to rise his own height. Nowhere is the grade over five inches to the hundred feet. The track is above the water 19 feet. The solid way has cut off one north arm of the lake into which the Bear river flows. This has made that part of the lake so fresh that it has frozen over in winter, though the more salty water on the other side of the track never freezes. Four and a half million dollars has been spent to make this highway.—Indianapolis News.

"Great Throng" of Poets.

Poets recently assembled in New York for symposium purposes are described by the local press as forming "a great throng!" Just think of it, a great throng of poets! And they used to be so rare that to find them even in a group was an unusual thing. It will be strange, after this remarkable New York announcement, if some clever political person does not organize the poets and attempt to swing an election with their votes.—Christian Science Monitor.

CENTENARY OF LOCOMOTIVE

Progress Made in 100 Years Shown by Comparison of the Billy No. 1 and the Matt H. Shay.

In connection with the completion of the Matt E. Shay, the largest locomotive ever put into service, the Erie railroad has issued a pamphlet describing the development of the locomotive since the Billy No. 1, the first locomotive with direct transmission of power to the wheels, was put into service in 1815. Something of the change made in locomotive construction during the last 100 years may be realized by a comparison of the Billy No. 1 and the Matt H. Shay. The Billy No. 1 was nine feet long, weighed 8,000 pounds and had a hauling capacity of 8,000 pounds, distributed on ten wagons. It had four driving wheels two feet in diameter. The Matt H. Shay has a length of 105 feet, a weight of 410 tons, and its hauling capacity is 640 gondola cars with a total weight of 90,000,000 pounds. It has 24 driving wheels of 63-inch diameter. If the Shay were placed at the head of a train of its maximum hauling capacity of 640 cars, the length of engine and train would be four and three-quarters miles. In actual service it has pulled a train two miles long, weighing 35,284,000 pounds, at a speed of 15 miles an hour.

Other large locomotives are in service in this country. The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe uses one with 16 driving wheels. Its weight is 616,000 pounds, and it can draw a train weighing 60,000,000 pounds. The Missouri Pacific owns a mountain type locomotive weighing 296,000 pounds which can take a train of 1,640,000 pounds up a grade of more than 100 feet to the mile. The Chemin de Fer du Nord, a French railroad, operates a locomotive which weighs 225,000 pounds. These engines make a long step from the primitive Billy No. 1, but the principle of direct drive is embodied in both the old and the new. There were locomotives before the Billy No. 1, but it was this engine upon which, in 1815, the British government issued the basic direct drive patents. The Billy No. 1 was the invention of the Stephensons, George and Robert, who in 1829 won the prize offered by the Liverpool & Manchester railroad for a thoroughly practical machine capable of carrying passengers.

SHORT CUT IS OFTEN FATAL

From 5,000 to 7,000 Trespassers on the Railroad Tracks of Country Are Killed Each Year.

Taking a short cut through the railroad yards to get home, John Jones was struck by a switch engine and killed.—News Item.

John Jones was a free American citizen and counted walking on the railroad tracks as among his rights under the Constitution. It was his custom when he got home at night by cutting through the yards to take up his newspaper, settle himself deeply into his chair and read until, speaking for the third time, and sharply, his wife called him to his meat and potatoes. Once in a while Jones would come upon accounts of railroad wrecks. They always aroused the deepest indignation in him. "'Tis nothing but criminal negligence causes 'em," he'd say.

It is a way with us Americans to see things criminal in our neighbors, none of them in ourselves. Take John Jones. He thought of railway wrecks as forms of depravity. But there was nothing wrong in cutting through the railway yards and running the risk of making his wife a widow, his children orphans. If you told him that about 80 or 90 people were killed in train accidents last year, he'd suggest hanging a few railroad presidents. But if you said that the number of trespassers killed varied from five thousand to seven thousand persons a year, he had no comment to make. The subject didn't interest him much.

Well, John Jones is gone now. His wife is in black. His children have been taken from school to earn rent for the cottage. Jones' neighbors still use the tracks as their highway.

Corporations have been taught a good deal of recent years as to their responsibilities. Wouldn't it be a good idea to take up the case of John Jones now?—Toledo Blade.

HOME TOWN HELPS

LET EACH CHILD HAVE PLOT

School Gardens Should Be Divided So as to Give an Individual Responsibility.

Pupils should have individual gardens. Give each child a plot and have the responsibility his alone if only a single plant can be grown on that plot, or use a pot plant, advises the Washington Star. Let the child see the result of his care or neglect. This cannot be accomplished where several children work in the same plot or care for the same plant. Not many grown people, if they are really good gardeners, would care to have each of the neighbors come in and take a hand at his garden. Individual work stimulates the interest and pride in the work, encourages skill and judgment that is entirely lost by collective work and at the same time develops the idea of responsibility.

Limited space necessitates the use of only compact, low-growing plants. In vegetables, radishes, lettuce, beans, beets and similar plants.

The children should do all the work, preparing the land, planting the seed and caring for the plants, the teacher explaining each step. Bulletin 218 of the department of agriculture describes the work and it is sent free on application.

From Washington southward seeds may be planted in the open ground, but in the North the seeds should be sown in boxes and kept growing until the middle of May to the first of June, according to the latitude, when they can be planted in their permanent locations.

Flowering plants that are good for the purpose are ageratum, nasturtium, petunia, California poppy, zinnia and portulaca.

THE HOME TOWN

Some folks leave home for money
And some leave home for fame,
Some seek skies always sunny,
And some depart in shame.
I care not what the reason
Men travel East or West,
Or what the month or season,
The home town is the best.

The home town is the glad town
Where something real abides,
'Tis not the money mad town
That all its spirit hides.
Though strangers scoff and flout it
And even jeer its name,
It has a charm about it
No other town can claim.

The home town skies seem bluer
Than skies that stretch away.
The home town friends seem truer
And kinder through the day,
And whether glum or cheery
Light hearted or depressed
Or struggle fit or weary
I like the home town best.

Let him who will go wander
To distant towns to live,
Of some things I am fonder
Than all they have to give.
The gold of distant places
Could not repay me quite
For those familiar faces
That keep the home town bright.

—Detroit Free Press.

How to Use the Pruning Shears.

Double-cutter shears used in orchard pruning give good satisfaction when used upon limbs smaller than three inches in diameter, writes M. G. Kains in Farm and Home. When care is taken to cut through the bark all around the branches to be removed, the wounds heal over much better than when the growing layer of bark and young wood are crushed by being squeezed from opposite sides without being cut all around first. One caution is necessary in using this implement:

When making cuts of forked limbs it is necessary to avoid bearing down, because the main branch to be left is likely to split, and a heavy load of fruit the following summer is almost sure to break the limb at this point. Effort should always be made to lift when making such cuts. Indeed, it is a good plan always to cut off the branch a foot or so beyond the point where the crotch is and then to remove the stub with a second cut.

Advantage of Playground.

Some small towns have adopted the plan of providing golf, baseball and tennis grounds for the use of the public, and the experiments made along this line so far have been highly successful. One of the first and most satisfactory results of providing playgrounds is made evident by the young people being content to remain at home rather than to wander off after entertainment and amusement elsewhere. Every step toward taking the dullness out of the small towns will help to lessen the congestion in the large cities.

Make Lawn Attractive.

Don't neglect to provide space on the house lot for a flower garden and shrubs. A nice lawn is attractive and needs something to relieve the monotony of color.

City Building Plan Adopted.

Sacramento, Cal., recently adopted, through its commissioners, a city plan, which provides that industrial plants shall be permitted only in designated districts.

Good Paint on Bad Surface.

Good paint on a bad surface is like unto a house builded upon the sand.

CANADA'S EXCELLENT FINANCIAL STANDING

Bank Clearings Increase—Agriculture Is a Paying Industry—Manufactures Doing Well.

"Business experts assert that Canada is on the threshold of perhaps the most prosperous era in her history. The unprecedented value of the farm products of 1915, together with the very large output of factories working on munitions of war has suddenly brought the country into a position, financially, scarcely hoped for as a nation for years to come. Export surplus of $50,000,000 a month is making Canada very strong in cash."—Extract from official bulletin of February 11, 1916.

The response by the farmers of Canada to the call for increased production in 1915 was a total net output exceeding one billion dollars, an increase over normal years of at least three hundred millions. The three Prairie Provinces contributed probably nearly one-half of the total product.

The wheat crop was worth $310,000,000, and accounted for about 30 per cent of the total agricultural product. Other things counted also. Look at dairying. In Ontario the dairy production was increased 20 per cent, and prices were over 10 per cent ahead of 1914. Other provinces shared in the increase, especially Alberta, Saskatchewan, Quebec and Nova Scotia. The dairy cow was "on the job" in 1915. So also were the beef cattle, the pigs and the hens.

It is not fair to the farmers of the Prairies to call the wheat crop of 1915 a "miracle" crop. The farmers cultivated more land and gave attention to their seed. Providence gave them favorable weather. Then they toiled early and late in the harvesting and threshing. Good cultivation gave bigger yields than careless work, 45 bushels as against 25.

The wealth of Western Canada is by no means all in its wheat crop. If the country had no wheat at all it would still be famous as a land of successful farmers on account of its stock production. From one shipping point (High River, Alberta) over $75,000.00 worth of horses have been sold in the last two months. The average price to the farmer has been about $175.00 per head. According to Government returns there are a million and a half horses in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, worth probably $150,000,000.

The investments which farmers of Western Canada are making in live stock and farm improvements are good evidence of the fact that they have money for these purposes. It is apparent, however, that they are also spending some of their profits on those things which will bring greater comfort and enjoyment to themselves, their wives and their families. The automobile trade all through the country is particularly active, and farmers are the biggest buyers. A recent report of the Saskatoon district shows that in two months a million dollars' worth of automobiles have been sold, largely to farmers. Nor are all of these cars of the cheaper makes; some high-priced machines are in demand.

Bank clearings throughout the Western Provinces show greater commercial activity than at the same season in 1915 or 1914, the increase for the last week of February being $8,000,000 and almost $9,000,000, respectively, for the first week of March $15,000,000 over 1915 and $18,000,000 over 1914. The same excellent story comes from Moose Jaw, Sask., where they showed from 40 to 100 per cent over the previous year. Calgary, Alta., bank clearings continue to reflect the greatly improved business conditions as compared with a year ago. Canada's bank clearings for the month of February, 1916, were the greatest for any February in the country's history. The totals amounted to $664,222,000.00, as compared with $487,296,000.00 for the same month a year ago. An increase of $177,000,000.00 in bank clearings for the month tells its own story of the country's prosperity.—Advertisement.

Something Different.

"Flabdub has written a very unusual romance."

"What's the startling theme?"

"It's about a married couple who live happily together."

Never Varies.

Doctor—What was the patient's mean temperature last week?

Wife—Oh, doctor, it's always mean.

Yea, Verily!

Little Lemuel—What an essay, paw?

Paw—An essay, son, is a paragraph padded with words.

One Reason for Peace.

Miss Faddie—I'm sure you'll sign this petition we're getting up to end the war.

Reggie—Bah Jove, I'll go you! They say that if it lasts much longer we'll have 50-cent gasoline.—Life.

Overheard on Joy Street.

"Why are you down on Sam, Rastus? He thinks a great deal of you; he told me so."

"Well, you just tell dat nigger fo' me dat his feelin's am not reciprossified dat's all."—Boston Evening